CULTURAL GUIDE
TO TANZANIA

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Introduction

No brief guide could possibly explain the myriad traditions and codes that govern social contact among the 130 ethnic groups that make up Tanzanian society. After giving a brief background on the history, politics, and economic status of the country, this guide mostly outlines cultural behavior and protocol. It describes certain basic courtesies common to most of the Tanzanian population and points out those areas which conflict or differ in some way from common American standards of behavior. It draws on conversations with Americans, Tanzanians, and Europeans from a variety of classes and different occupations, as well as various books and articles. The comments that follow pertain primarily to African Tanzanians; where necessary, differentiated points are made about Asian customs. Primarily urban, rather than rural, patterns of behavior are discussed, as the bulk of most U.S. Government work takes place in towns.

Although individual Tanzanians are strongly influenced in their cultural and social habits by their tribal background, they are becoming more integrated as a people due to the strong influence of a national language (Swahili or Kiswahili). Other factors that have influenced the traditional societies have been the large influx of missionaries (and their emphasis on education), as well as the thrust of the government toward education for self-reliance. It appears that many group affiliations are changing in Tanzania—away from the tribes and around new units of political, religious, and regional emphasis.

BACKGROUND

History

On August 7, 1998, the U.S. embassy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, was bombed by terrorists, killing 11 people and injuring 72. This was the first terrorist incident in a country that until then had long been regarded as relatively tranquil.

The area now known as Tanzania was first colonized by Arab traders in 700, who founded the city of Kilwa. Portuguese explorers reached the coastal regions in the 15th century. Together with Arabic overlords from Muscat and Oman, the Portuguese established flourishing trading cities and sultanates—particularly on the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba. The sultanate of Zanzibar controlled both the islands and the mainland coast until the mid-1800s. In 1886 German colonization of Tanganyika and what are now Burundi and Rwanda created what was known as German East Africa. Zanzibar remained independent, but became a British protectorate in 1890. After World War I, Tanzania was administered by Britain under a League of Nations mandate and later as a UN trust territory.

Tanganyika became independent on December 9, 1961, and Zanzibar on December 10, 1963. On April 26, 1964, the two nations merged into the United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Six months later the name was changed to the United Republic of Tanzania. Tanzania because a socialist republic under Julius Nyerere of the Revolutionary Party (*Chama Cha Mapinduzi* in Swahili, or CCM). In 1985 Nyerere stepped down as president and Ali Hassan Mwinyi, his vice president, succeeded him. Mwinyi was reelected without opposition in 1990, although he promised to step down after democratic elections. In 1995 the country's first multiparty elections since independence took place. Benjamin Mkapa of the CCM was elected and the CCM maintained a majority in parliament. Mkapa won a second term in 2000 with 72 percent of the vote.

The union between Zanzibar and the mainland has been mostly successful but not without its problems; the Arab majority seeks more control over the island's economy and politics. The region is semiautonomous and elects its own president and legislature. There have been ongoing disputes between the government and the opposition, preventing the government from functioning after the 1995 elections and continuing even after a 1999 agreement with the opposition. Amani Karume of the CCM was elected president in the fall of 2000, but the opposition Civic United Front (CUF) refused to recognize the results. Violent demonstrations on Zanzibar and Pemba left dozens of CUF supporters dead in early 2001, and hundreds more fled to Kenya. The CCM and CUF are currently implementing measures to promote reconciliation after reaching an initial agreement in late 2001.

Political System

Tanzania is a republic with a multiparty system, and is comprised of an executive, legislative, and judicial branch. The ruling party, the Revolutionary Party (CCM), was

formed in February 1977 with the merger of the mainland's Tanganyika African National Union and the Afro-Shirazi party of Zanzibar. The Government of Tanzania legalized additional political parties in May 1992 by amending the constitution and creating the Political Parties Act of 1992. The first multiparty elections took place in 1995. There are currently 13 fully registered political parties. To qualify for registration, all parties must have members from both mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar.

The National Assembly, or Bunge, has 274 members currently comprised of Members of Parliament from five national parties: the Revolutionary Party (Chama Cha Mapinduzi, CCM) holds 244 seats; the Civic United Front (CUF) 16; Chama Cha Democrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA) 4; Tanzania Labor Party (TLP) 3; the United Democratic Party (UDP) 2; and Zanzibar representatives 5. Of the 274 seats, 232 are elected by popular vote, 37 allocated to women nominated by the president, five to members of the Zanzibar House of Representatives. Members serve five-year terms. In addition to enacting laws that apply to the entire United Republic of Tanzania, the National Assembly enacts laws that apply only to the mainland. Zanzibar has its own House of Representatives to make laws for Zanzibar. Zanzibar's House has 50 seats, directly elected by universal suffrage to serve five-year terms, and is currently comprised of CCM (34 seats) and CUF (16). Elections were last held October 29, 2000, and are next scheduled for October 2005.

Since November 23, 1995, Benjamin William Mkapa has served as president, and since July 5, 2001, Dr. Ali Mohammed Shein as vice president. The president functions as both head of state and head of government. The president appoints a prime minister, who does not function as the head of government. Zanzibar elects a president who is head of government for matters internal to Zanzibar; Amani Abeid Karume as served in that office since the elections of October 29, 2000.

Economic Status

Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world. The economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, which accounts for half of GDP, provides 85 percent of exports, and employs 80 percent of the work force. Topography and climatic conditions, however, limit cultivated crops to only 4 percent of the land area. Industry is mainly limited to processing agricultural products and light consumer goods. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and bilateral donors have provided funds to rehabilitate Tanzania's deteriorated economic infrastructure.

Economic liberalization has encouraged private investment and the creation of new export products. Continued democratic reforms are expected to boost economic performance. However, corruption, mismanagement, and regional problems still hamper the economy. Progress has also been hindered by droughts and flood damage.

Women tend to enjoy equal access with men to income. Overall, however, people have limited access to resources and opportunities to pursue personal goals and rise above poverty. Half of Tanzanians live in poverty.

The People

Tanzania’s population of about 37 million is growing at about 2.6 percent annually. On the mainland native Africans make up 99 percent of the population of which 95 percent are Bantu consisting of more than 130 tribes. The other 1 percent consists of Asians, Europeans, and Arabs. Zanzibar’s population is Arab, native African, and mixed Arab and native African.

Tanzanian society is very religious. On the mainland, 30 percent of the population is Christian, 35 percent Muslim, and 35 percent hold indigenous beliefs. On Zanzibar, 99 percent of the population is Muslim.

Tanzanian Swahili (or Kiswahili) is the official language, while English is the second official language and is used in business, government, and higher education. Arabic is widely spoken in Zanzibar. Zanzibar is also considered to have the purest Swahili, which locals call *Kiunguju*.

LANGUAGE

Appropriate Greeting Forms

However poor your general knowledge of Kiswahili may be, acquaintance with the proper greeting rituals is indispensable. Failure to greet properly is considered extremely impolite and is seen as a personal slight. Ignoring greeting conventions can make even simple encounters difficult. Tanzanian office workers expect to be greeted in the mornings and greet each other before getting down to work. It is always helpful, and never incorrect, to offer greetings when shopping in a market or store, when ordering from a waiter in a restaurant or bar, or when asking for information or assistance in an office, even though none of these situations necessarily call for greetings in the United States. Waiting until the other person asks, "How may I help you?" before expressing your needs can avoid a lot of hostility and bad service.

Tanzanians often complain that Americans are too quick to come to the point of business, whether it is in making an appointment, conducting an interview, or asking someone's name. Tanzanians often regard being direct, which an American values, as rude. Although Americans may sometimes fret over the seemingly interminable Swahili greetings and other ways of "beating around the bush," they also find that all kinds of business is carried out more efficiently by following greeting conventions. This advice, "to make haste slowly," is equally as true in business and social encounters with Tanzanian Asians as it is with Tanzanian Africans. Take note of the Swahili proverb, "Haraka, haraka, haina baraka," i.e., "haste has no blessing."

Greetings between equals use some variation on "habari gani?" according to the time of day or the period of time since you last saw the other person. Younger people and guests are supposed to be greeted first. When greeting an older person, regardless of his social status, one uses "Shikamoo," to which the reply is "Marahaba." Because in many cases

the younger person is in a position of greater authority in the office or at a meeting, however, "Habari" is sufficient. Yet, "Shikamoo" is usually appreciated in social situations or other encounters outside the office. Literally translated, "Shikamoo" means, "I'm cringing in front of you" and dates from the slave days when a slave would greet his master; the response, "Marahaba" means, literally, "I accept it."

Some of the variations on the greetings between equals include:

Habari Zako? (How are you?)
Response: Nzuri (Good); Salaama (peaceful)

Habari za nyumbani? (How is your home?)
Response: Njema (fine)

Hujambo/Hamjambo (PI) (Is there anything the matter?)
Response: Sijambo/ Hatuyambo (pl) (Nothing is wrong)

Habari za asubuhi? (What's the news of the morning?)
Response: Njema (fine)

Habari za mchana? (What's the news of the afternoon?)
Response: Nzuri/Njema/ Salaama (from 1 to 4 p.m.)

Habari za jioni? (What's the news of the late afternoon?) after 4 until dark

Habari za kutwa? (How has the day been?) an evening inquiry

Other important phrases to know include:

Hatari (danger)

Asante (Thank you)
Response: Karibu (You're welcome)

Ndio (Yes)
Hapannah (No)

Wapi choo (Where's the toilet?)

When meeting Tanzanians, it is customary to shake hands, even with those to whom you are not introduced, and to exchange greetings. One shakes with one hand only for equals; a younger person greeting an elder person will use two hands in order to show more respect. A recent innovation in the hand-shaking arena is the double handshake, which has been brought to Tanzania from outside countries where blacks use it to indicate solidarity. This is used primarily by young people and involves the usual handshake followed by a clasping of the hands upward together. Men and women do not usually

shake hands except in very official or very friendly circumstances. Only very close friends hug but never kiss.

It is not polite to ask many of the questions with which Americans habitually begin conversations. Do not, for example, ask someone whether they are married or have children, what ethnic group they belong to, their age, or detailed questions about their work. You may talk about the weather, or how you find Tanzania, or whether the other person has ever traveled abroad. Since children are such an important part of each family's social structure and economic outlook, queries about them are always appreciated. Health, weather, and politics are common topics of discussion. Tanzanians will ask you many questions about life in the United States. If you offer information about yourself first (where you are from and what you do), you can expect a similar response, but do not be the first to ask direct personal questions, such as age, income, or social position. Nor should you be surprised if questions you do ask go unanswered. People are more forthcoming only as you get to know them better.

Appropriate Titles and Honorifics

Tanzanians have also mentioned that Americans are at times too free with the use of first names. Even husbands and wives do not address each other by their first names but rather as "Mama Ali" or "Baba Habil." Again, this relates to the Tanzanian notions of respect. Ask your counterparts or office staff how they would like to be addressed before assuming that you can use their first names. The Tanzanians who have worked in American government offices for some time are accustomed to the use of given names; however, it is better to use "Mr. Kimara" or "Miss Kibaha" until you are sure, or simply ask what their preferences are.

In the same vein, do not be too free with the use of "Ndugu." Popularized by the Tanzanian government as an egalitarian title, and used in all the newspapers, it is nonetheless still a sensitive word to the general population. Some ethnic groups use it only to refer to relatives, and are offended by its indiscriminate use as a title. Other individuals are offended by being called "Ndugu" by foreigners, especially those who are neither African nor from socialist countries. While most government officials are properly called "Ndugu" instead of "mister," a waiter is more easily hailed with the phrase "Tafadhali Bwana" ("Please, sir").

The word "Bwana," Swahili for master or mister, suffers from similar ambiguity. During the colonial times, only Europeans were addressed "Bwana" in deference to their higher political and economic status. Today it may be used between two Africans, or by household help to refer to the head of the family, as in "Bwana is not at home."

In the same way, married women may be referred to as "Bibi." You will also hear "Mama" being used both as a title and to refer to another woman, whether married or not. Tanzanian women are often addressed as "Mama" followed by the name of their oldest child, as in "Mama Ali," rather than by their given or husband's name. Married women do not always take their husband's names, although it is becoming more common to do so.

When inquiring if the head of the house is at home, the term "Mzee" is frequently used. Tanzanians never ask if the husband or father is home but ask for the head of the house. A child will refer to both his father and all male relatives as "Baba"; all female relatives, along with a child's mother, are called "Mama."

Language, Gestures, and Facial Expressions

Both Kiswahili and English are the official national languages of Tanzania, although the government is increasingly encouraging the use of Swahili in schools and public institutions at the expense of English. While most Mission staff will not need to use Kiswahili professionally, since virtually all government officials and their staffs speak English, there is no question that an adequate command of the language greatly eases social intercourse outside the office while shopping, marketing, dealing with household help, or traveling. While ordinary Tanzanians are normally both friendly and helpful to foreigners who cannot speak Kiswahili, even minimal competence in the language ensures a warmer and more hospitable response. Obviously, the better your Kiswahili, the richer your interaction with Tanzanians will be.

Tanzanians rarely show emotions, although, as with most people, a big smile shows approval as does nodding. In speaking, or in social situations, it is preferred to maintain a distance of 2 to 3 feet between individuals, especially males and females. Touching or other intimate gestures are not appreciated and in some areas may cause offense.

The American gesture for thumbing a ride is not used in Tanzania; a low wave indicating "stop here" is utilized for this purpose. Tanzanians find several American habits/gestures offensive including blowing bubbles with gum, chewing gum while speaking, and shouting.

Physical stance also communicates respect or, alternatively, disrespect. Tanzanians comment that some typical American postures can be annoying, as they are seen as disrespectful. These include sitting with your feet on the desk in the office, standing with your hands in your pockets, or not shaking hands. A worker does not look at his superior directly; on the contrary, looking down or aside while being spoken to is a sign of respect. It indicates humility, not evasiveness.

Americans and Tanzanians have different standards for expressing humor and affection. You will see that Tanzanians laugh at things that you do not find amusing—such as a person falling down or a child crying. So long as no one is badly hurt, it is seen as a funny, not a worrisome incident, and the emphasis is on encouraging the person to get up and forget about it.

It has been estimated that approximately 35 percent of the Tanzanian population follows the teachings of Islam. This is particularly evident along the coast and in Zanzibar, where the Arab influence has been the greatest. Consequently, many of the Islamic rules of behavior and dress apply.

Tanzanians find exposed bodies unpleasant. A man may acceptably remove his shirt when doing physical labor only. To see men or boys half dressed is objectionable to most Tanzanians. Although it is understood that the Europeans/Americans normally wear shorts, this habit is tolerated but not encouraged. You will often find household help wearing shorts in which to work, but they will always change to long trousers before going out in the street. Of course these rules pertain even more so to women. Be particularly sensitive to this issue when visiting Zanzibar, where indigenous women are robed from head to foot.

In most areas of the country, the left hand is not used for eating or for handing objects from one person to another, particularly among the Muslims. Tanzanians may be aware that Americans do not share their aversion to using the left hand, but still find it disconcerting to see. Among the Gogo tribe members, it is believed that if a man accepts a gift with his left hand, the object will not remain long in his keeping. When giving or receiving some item, try to remember to use both hands.

SOCIAL CUSTOMS

Gifts and Bonuses

When Tanzania encouraged the values of socialism, tipping was frowned upon. However, in the larger cities, it has now become acceptable. Similarly, giving a monetary honorarium is not as acceptable as giving a gift either at the time or on a later occasion.

When visiting a Tanzanian, it is not expected that the guest bring a gift, but as in any other part of the world, it is greatly appreciated. It is offensive not to accept gifts, or not to accept food and drink when offered; although by politely saying "Asante lakini nimeshiba," one may gracefully decline by indicating prior satisfaction.

Tanzanians show appreciation in various ways and at various times. Sometimes upon receipt of a gift they will show their gratitude by bowing as they accept it or by clapping their hands. Sometimes they will at a later time come back to the donor and express the appreciation verbally. At the very least, the Swahili words "Asante Sana" will be expressed.

During celebrations gifts are often given to juniors or those not so well off. Again, because of the Muslim influence, assisting those less fortunate is considered a blessing upon the donor. At marriages or funerals, everyone gives some money to offset the expenses. This is expected and much appreciated.

The Gogo and some other tribes eschew pointing with the thumb or index finger as this used to be considered a feared method of witchcraft; they also abstain from pointing even at objects in general.

Visiting in Host Country Homes

Meeting Tanzanians is not difficult. As they say, "Sifa yetu ni kukarishabisha," loosely, "We are known for our hospitality." On the other hand, while friendly and polite, Tanzanians also seem to Americans to be reserved—in contrast to the greater openness to and acceptance of foreigners that many West Africans exhibit. This is not the result of either overt or convert anti-Americanism; it is rather an expression of Swahili customs. Sensitivity to Tanzanian behavior will go a long way toward breaking down these barriers of reserve and toward making close friendships.

Since most houses in Tanzania do not have a bell or door knocker, it is customary to knock softly at the door once or twice and then to call, "Hodi" (May I come in?) Repeat this for at least three times if there is no immediate response. Stand to the side of the door and wait for a "Karibu" (welcome) response from within. The people you are visiting will open the door for you and invite you in. Usually they will then say, "Karibu ndani," or "Come right inside." Once you are inside, they will indicate a place for you to sit, saying, "Karibu keti" or "Karibu ukae" (take a seat/sit). You should then accept the seat saying "Asante" or "Starehe," meaning thank you or I am at home/I feel at home. If the seat is a mat on the floor, first remove your shoes before stepping on it.

Visiting is the best way, and an enjoyable one, to get to know Tanzanians. When invited to a Tanzanian home, it is not necessary to bring a gift on the first visit, though it is polite to do so on successive ones. You will probably be offered food and/or drink. Saying “Tukapatie chai au kahawa” might do this? (should we offer you tea or coffee?) Make your choice and say, "Chai tafadhali" (tea please) or "Kahawa tafadhali" (coffee please). If you feel like declining, say politely, "Asante sana, bali nimetosheka" (thank you very much, but I have had enough). While you need not eat everything, it is impolite to refuse entirely, even if it is a short visit. Try to taste a little of each dish. It is all right to decline a food on the grounds that it is not your custom to eat it. Many ethnic groups have different foods prohibited to them by religion or custom, and such preferences among Americans are also accepted. If attending a funeral or wedding, however, it is very important at least to taste the food if you are offered it, as eating together on these occasions is an expression of group solidarity, and not to participate is rude. It can easily be interpreted as a personal insult.

Americans are often incensed by the seemingly casual manner in which Tanzanians handle their invitations. Frequently, when a couple is invited for a meal the husband comes without the wife. Americans should understand that some Tanzanian wives of even upper echelon dignitaries feel very shy in the presence of foreigners, perhaps due to a lack of English. Just as Americans would feel uncomfortable in a social setting in which they could not converse at all, Tanzanians too avoid such difficult occasions. Some American hosts, although they have received confirmations for their functions, find at the last minute that the guests do not show up. One must consider that in Tanzania something frequently goes wrong at the last minute—usually in the area of transport. Because phones often do not function, the unfortunate guest has no way of letting his host know of his difficulty, and therefore gives the host the impression of rudeness by just not showing up at the appointed hour.

On receiving a Tanzanian visitor in your home, always offer tea or a cold drink. If you are busy, you may leave your guest with a drink and a promise to return in a few minutes. People cannot always phone in advance, and will understand if you are occupied. You might take your guest on a tour of the house and garden, or show pictures of your family, but, as mentioned earlier, refrain from asking personal questions. Many Tanzanians do not drink alcohol, so soft drinks and fruit juices should be available. Entertaining in the larger cities is usually at an informal level and most Americans feel that the buffet style rather than formal dinners work better when entertaining several guests at the same time.

When the visit is over, walk your Tanzanian guests out of the house, either to their car, or, if they are walking, for some distance. Some Tanzanians say (though it is hard to know how seriously) that if you walk a guest only to the door, you do not want him to come back. As with many older customs, this is changing with time. Many Tanzanians who have been educated overseas and exposed to other cultures follow the practice of seeing the guest just to the door.

When invited to a Tanzanian home for a meal, frequently the meal comes *first* and the drinks later. At a marriage, however, the drinks come first. In these economically difficult times, most ordinary Tanzanians cannot afford to entertain, so you should not expect very many invitations during your stay in Tanzania. The usual rules of protocol follow in Tanzania: wait for the host to eat or drink first; when invited, let the host know if you cannot make it; say thank you when leaving or send a note afterward. Be sensitive to the Muslim custom of not using the left hand for eating and passing foods. Many Tanzanians follow this etiquette.

People may come to visit you when you are sick. It is also a nice gesture to visit someone else when they are sick, or if they have had a death in the family. You need not stay long; it is the appearance that is important. Although on other occasions one would never visit in the bedroom, it is entirely appropriate in this case. Gifts are not necessary, though in the case of a funeral, as previously stated, money with which to purchase the white burial cloth is appreciated. A new baby is also an occasion for a visit, and you can bring a small item for the infant. You will probably be asked to hold the baby, and you should do so. Should the baby not be shown to you, do not ask to see it until offered.

In a village situation, the men will eat together and the women will eat separately. In most cases, women make food for men, and often the better share in quality and quantity is given to men. Children are, in most cases, treated as women, feeding from the pot in the kitchen.

For special occasions, a crier will go around announcing the event and place, and all are welcome to attend. Villagers will bestow items of food on the crier to add to the feast. No special invitations will be extended; all are expected to attend.

Remember that Tanzanians are almost always genuine in offering hospitality. Hospitality accepted is a blessing to them.

One practice that Muslims accept as taboo is the consumption of pork. In some areas (Tabora & Korogwe) even non-Muslims observe this taboo so as to retain a good relationship with their Muslim neighbors and friends. Other prohibitionary practices are “weak” beliefs usually confined to a clan, a family, or even individuals. Often those observing these prohibitions do not know why they adhere to them, except as an order or advice from the older members. Particular clans might not eat eggs, certain wild animals or fish. Fruits or vegetables are usually left to children and women. Foods like eggs, chicken, and certain fish are regarded as "weakening" and unsuitable to women, especially when pregnant. Meat of a dead animal or any meat slaughtered by a non-Muslim is not eaten by Muslims. Members of certain clans have to avoid parts of slaughtered animals that are forbidden to them. Beans are blamed as the cause of distended abdomens in children, and many Muslims feel that meat should only be given to children in very small quantities, for fear of creating a craving for meat later. Most Tanzanians are deeply religious and believe God is the origin and supporter of all things. There is a strong sense of the holy and a widespread belief in spirits and magic. Medicine men, rainmakers, mediums, and diviners are important members of society. Ancestors are venerated and the remembered dead still considered part of life. There are no jokes about religion in this society.

Social Gatherings Outside of the Home

As in other countries, groups of working colleagues will often frequent a local pub and sit together. Office workers obtaining meals frequent the *Mikahawa* (coffee bars) just during the day. Because of the poor economic situation, most mid/lower economic groups cannot afford to frequent bars that sell other alcoholic beverages/beer and so prefer the places that sell locally produced *Pombe*. Foreigners usually do not frequent such places.

In the cities, the markets are not usually centers for social interaction; but in the villages, the market is an important meeting place for bartering and socializing. Schools in Tanzania, as in most places, are important gathering places for parents and children. People do not socialize on the street on a regular basis. Of course, churches and mosques are the most important gathering places for socializing, and play an important role in Tanzanian life.

Weddings, Baptisms, and Funerals

The role of kin is still central to Tanzanian social and recreational life. Visiting kin on joyous and sorrowful family occasions is given high priority despite the inconvenience caused by a relatively undeveloped transport system.

A marriage is of some importance not only to those involved in the marriage, but to the community as a whole. Bride wealth, and mode of payment vary from one ethnic group to another.

A wedding is an important, happy occasion, which is usually held in a church/mosque or private home. In the larger cities, invitations will be sent; but in the villages, the town

crier invites all. At this event, a guest is expected to eat and drink everything. There will be dancing, music, and drinks; a gift to assist the newlyweds start housekeeping is expected. A guest should dress in his finest clothes; many Tanzanians will wear ceremonial dress for such occasions.

Marriage customs are considered an important part of life and economics, and have been slow to change. The custom of cross-cousin marriage helped preserve family prestige and property, and the churches teaching to the contrary was hard for people to accept. Another practice, which the church opposed, was the "experimenting period" prior to marriage.

At baptisms and confirmations, all are usually welcome by verbal invitation. Again, one dresses in his Sunday-best clothes and is expected to give a card, some money, or clothes to the honored child.

It is expected that all will attend a funeral as a last service to the dead person. At a Christian funeral, men and women may attend. Generally, at a Muslim funeral, only men are allowed to attend, but there are times when both men and women attend but are seated separately. It must be noted that there are different Muslim groups and beliefs with varying customs. When visiting the family house either before or after the funeral, there will usually be a dish for monetary contributions from the guests. The guests are expected to sign the register beside the dish. One says "Poleni" (I'm very sorry) to the family members, and guests are expected to partake of the food and drink offered.

At the time of burial, it is customary for members of the funeral party to join in the procession, even for a short distance, as a mark of respect for the departed.

One unusual facet of some Tanzanian funerals that is hard for Americans to understand is the *Utani* activities. In many communities, another clan comes to serve the bereaved family by cooking, cutting firewood, or serving food at the funeral. But instead of being sad and solemn, these people will joke and laugh and dance and even make music in order to put across the message that death is natural and life goes on. They are in essence lightening the heavy hearts of the bereaved. In some cases this role is played by the grandchildren, who will praise their grandparent, portray his faults to show he was not a saint but accepted as he was, and try to cheer up the occasion.

Muslims believe that at the time of death the person's spirit leaves but his shadow remains on earth for 40 days. Forty days after the funeral there is usually another ceremony performed to ensure that the spirit/shadow leaves in peace. Dances are performed and praises sung, and the ancient dead are invoked to receive the soul in peace. Another Muslim custom frequently observed is the 40-day period of mourning and seclusion for the widow. During this period the widow finds comfort in reading the Koran and it is not appropriate to visit or talk to the widow.

In an office situation, when a colleague dies, it is customary for fellow workers to take up a collection to assist the bereaved family in burying the dead as well as providing for the food necessary for the funeral activities.

RECREATION

Barber and Beauty Shops

Some hair salons in the large hotels do not require appointments but most of the smaller, busy salons appreciate some advance appointment, especially if the stylist is popular. Men can usually get a haircut without an appointment at barbershops that cater to foreigners, but if they prefer styling, they must make appointments at the "ladies" beauty shops.

In large cities, one can usually find a full range of beauty services including facials, massage, waxing, manicures/pedicures, as well as hairdressing. If there is a need for a particular brand or type of product, one is advised to bring his or her own particular brand of hair treatment preparations, nail polish, or permanent wave supplies. There have been no reported problems with the hygienic conditions at the places utilized, but the degree of sterilization is far less than that required in the United States.

Theaters and Cinemas

There are so few live theaters available in Tanzania that any program offered is an immediate sell-out. One must purchase tickets as soon as the date is announced. Tickets are general admission only, not for reserved seats. The cinemas offer primarily Indian films, which usually do not appeal to American/European tastes. One may purchase tickets at the door at the time of the performance.

Restaurants

In the larger cities and tourist areas, one finds the usual assortment of restaurants in and outside of hotels. Most of the tourist lodges have one main dining room offering a limited menu. In the smaller establishments, there are usually only two choices of main course, accompanied by fresh bread and soup; coffee and tea are served later. Some restaurants specialize just in chicken or in Indian dishes. One can easily find small local restaurants that cater more toward the Tanzanian taste and pocketbook.

Other Public and Private Places

Another sign of the economic revival in recent years is the opening of fitness centers and health clubs. There are four or five privately owned and operated health facilities offering modern exercise equipment and classes, sauna, massage, and yoga.

There are many private social clubs in Dar es Salaam. Some cater to the sports minded (the Gymkhana Club); some to boating enthusiasts (the Yacht Club); and others offer the opportunity just to socialize.

An effort to develop public parks with play equipment for children and sports facilities for youth was made at an earlier time; however, lack of funds to maintain such areas has led to their demise.

There is a stadium on the outskirts of Dar es Salaam, and Tanzanians are keen football enthusiasts (as evidenced by the sports pages of the *Daily News* and the heated letters written to the "Sports Line" in that paper). They also greatly enjoy viewing local dance troupes, which perform periodically. Charity walks are a favorite means of raising funds for various causes. Other than organized demonstrations, there are few public gatherings in the streets. One sees funeral and wedding parties, but these are private affairs.

Storytelling has always been a favorite amusement. But the good storyteller makes his tale so long, involved, and full of repetition that it is difficult for an American to follow the thread of it. Many tribes have a collection of stock fairy tales—those with a moral being most popular.

Generally speaking, girls have few toys, probably because from a very early age they start helping their mothers in their work and looking after the younger children. "Uluguru," a favorite game with young girls, features an *ngoma* (dance/fair) portraying a woman's work from the time she gets up in the morning until she goes to bed at night.

Hotels

Hotels and tourist lodges that cater to expatriates are run pretty much the same in Tanzania as they are in other parts of the world. One checks in and registers at the main desk after having first made confirmed reservations prior to arrival. Most rooms come with attached baths, and the charge includes bed and breakfast. Some rooms are equipped with three beds to accommodate families and are charged at a different rate than the standard double. Some hotels charge half-rate for young children.

It is imperative that one makes reservations in advance and has confirmation in writing to present at the desk at check-in time. This is especially true when booking a safari, which will include different lodges in the various game parks.

GETTING AROUND

Shopping

Shopping in Tanzania can be a challenging adventure, depending on your penchant for bargaining. It helps a lot if you learn some language basics in order to make friendly greetings and to understand background conversation in Swahili concerning the price. Some basic words to assist the amateur bargainer are:

"Karibu" (Welcome—from shopkeepers)
"Njoo" (Come—from shopkeepers)
"Asante" (Thank you—a good reply to the welcome greeting)
"Habari gani" (How are you?—a nice greeting from customer)
"Hapana" (No—to refuse a price offer)
"Unaniua" (You are killing me—used to indicate that the price is too high)

Watch the locals. In Tanzania, one shows slight interest in the item desired but always reacts to the first price offered as being much too expensive. Bargaining is like a game, but you must follow the rules to be successful. If you have some Tanzanian friends, ask permission to tag along with them to learn the techniques of haggling.

Keep a pencil and paper handy (or pocket calculator). These are useful not only for figuring relative values based on your currency, but providing a pause wherein you can re-group your language skills or strengthen your bargaining position. In advance you should make up your mind what you want and how much it is worth to you. Sometimes it is best to go after only one thing at a time; although sometimes it is effective to put several items together to achieve a "discount for quantity" rate.

When a merchant names his price, usually cut it in half. That gives both of you a starting point from which to work. Then start to haggle and work in small increments up or down. The final price can usually be figured to be almost half between the shopkeepers and yours. Try to learn some Swahili numbers so that you can be a more effective bargainer. If they think you understand the language, they are more likely to give you a better price. Throw in "Unaniua" often to indicate that the price is just too high.

Do not carry a lot of large denomination bills. Vendors worldwide never seem to have change. Do not overdress to go shopping. You will be judged according to your appearance and charged accordingly. And do not show any cash until you have settled the price and are sure it covers everything.

Never lose your temper. The merchant probably needs your business more than you need his product. Do not judge a merchant's status by his/her dress. Shabby clothes are often part of the act. Conclude your bargaining on a friendly note: "Asante, Kwaheri" means thank you and farewell, to which the merchant may respond with "Karibu Tena" or "Come again." Many articles you will purchase are not valuable in a monetary sense. But if you haggle for them, they become priceless symbols to you of other ways of life that you were lucky enough to experience.

Transportation

There are several types of taxis around Dar es Salaam. Most have their home district name and number painted on the side and have therefore been registered with the government. Some private taxi companies are not numbered but are run by reputable fleet owners. Other taxis are unregistered. In many instances, the taxis are not well maintained

mechanically and are hazardous to use. Taxi drivers vary in skill and daring. Perhaps because of the fragile condition of their cars, some drive with extra care; others hustle to complete this trip in order to get another fare. One can usually find taxis at certain taxi stands around town. Only the private companies can be called to order a cab.

Some private bus operators run *Dala Dalas* (minibuses), which offer more convenient services for a slightly greater fee per trip. Use of these vehicles is risky due to lack of mechanical maintenance, overcrowding, and dangerous driving habits.

Using the out-of-town bus services is even riskier, as the buses try to carry huge amounts of cargo on top and frequently tip over. Bus fares vary, depending on the distance to be traveled. Be sure to pay for a reserved seat to avoid difficulty finding a spot on overcrowded buses. At stops, guard your luggage, for thieves take advantage of such opportunities. Riding on buses is exceedingly uncomfortable because of rough roads and overcrowded conditions. There are no well-appointed rest stops along the often very long and arduous trips and certainly no fast food restaurants.

Some tour companies offer mid-sized Combis to specific points for which they charge a flat rate. Depending on the number of occupants, the fee per individual may be cheaper and the trip safer and more convenient. Many people use such transportation on safaris and find it usually satisfactory. Despite the economic difficulties in Tanzania, the tour companies are exerting great effort to attract tourists and make their visits as pleasant as possible.

Riding a train can be a pleasurable way to travel as long as one is able to obtain first or second-class accommodations and can spare the time. First-class trips can be very pleasant experiences, albeit longer than a comparable car journey to the same destination. As always, when using public transportation, one must keep an eye on luggage to make sure it is safely stowed. Third-class train travel is not recommended as it is neither comfortable nor safe.

Tanzanian driving laws follow British tradition. Cars travel on the left and give way to the traffic on the right within traffic circles (roundabouts). In cities, there are stoplights at major intersections. Swahili signs saying "Simama" indicate that one must stop at intersections.

One must drive very defensively throughout Tanzania. Oncoming cars trying to avoid potholes may lurch into your path at any time, or the car you are passing may suddenly swerve toward you. Even in Dar, many roads are in deplorable condition, and hitting potholes at speed causes flat tires, bent wheels, and other damage. People and animals walking along the road are unpredictable and may suddenly run into the road in front of you. Be prepared to halt your car at any time.

In the event of an accident, it is recommended that you do not stop, but drive to the Embassy. Once there, the police will be contacted and a report made. Accept no responsibility for the accident and pay no compensation until you have consulted with the

police and perhaps legal counsel. If you are involved in a two-car collision where there is no injury to human beings or property, report to the police and Embassy. A compromise will usually be worked out later. In an accident involving bodily injury, if you strike someone, killing or badly injuring that person, drive away without stopping to the nearest police and report the accident. This is for your own safety. Mobs are very sensitive to fatal accidents or injury to persons, and drivers have been assaulted and beaten to death. If you strike a wild animal and kill or injure it, you need not do anything. If it is a domestic animal (cow, goat, or dog), report it to the nearest police who may help you to recompense the owner.

It is recommended not to drive country roads after dark because of dangerous driving conditions and possible car jacking. The roads are bad enough when one can see all the hazards ahead and extremely dangerous after 7:00 p.m. In Dar es Salaam, it is often recommended that you take a guard with you to stay with your car when parking downtown for functions. Some people have returned from an evening activity to find their windshield or headlights missing.

In Dar es Salaam there are periods of heavy traffic. During the morning and afternoon hours, going into town, one may experience delays on the road. Saturday mornings, when the shops are only open until 1:00 p.m., traffic is very heavy and parking most difficult.

Telephoning

There are now few public telephones available in Tanzania, and those that are usable are found inside the Post and Telegraph offices. Most Tanzanian towns have direct dial codes and may be dialed accordingly; other calls must go through the operator. Direct dialing of international calls is now available. In private homes, telephones are frequently out of order, and incoming calls are sometimes sent to the wrong number. Some Kiswahili words you might hear when answering the phone are: "Habari? Samahani" (excuse me—wrong number) and "Kwaheri" (goodbye). If an inquiry is made about your number, and it is not the one being called, you might need to use the word "Hapana" (no). Messages are sometimes difficult to leave as the party on the other telephone may not speak English or may forget to relay your message. It is usually a good idea to follow up with another call later to ensure that your message was received.

Although you can get tremendously frustrated with wrong numbers, interrupted calls, and non-functioning telephones both at your end and at the other end, it is always advisable to contain your anger. After all, it is not the fault of the caller/callee that the telephones malfunction, and he/she is probably just as aggravated as you are about the situation.

Traveling in the Country

Driving either in or outside the cities offers a unique set of challenges. During the dry season, the roads are usually passable, albeit uncomfortable and sometimes hazardous. But during the heavy rains, some roads are totally washed out. The primary hazard, however, is from vehicles swerving to miss the many large potholes. Many serious

accidents have occurred because of such maneuvers. Often city stop lights malfunction or the stop signs (“SIMAMA”) have been knocked over, making major intersections dangerous.

Americans are not encouraged to use most public transportation, as discussed earlier. In so far as flying goes, the local airlines are struggling to keep their planes maintained and flyable; there are often delays and canceled flights as a result. Even with confirmed tickets, it is important to be timely in boarding because many times more tickets than seats have been sold.

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS AND ROLES

Differences in Host Country Roles of Men, Women, and Children

Tanzania, in general, is very much a male-dominated society. Although there is a sense that attitudes are changing, women are still relegated to a secondary position, which most still accept as correct and proper. Economically, the male is expected to be the breadwinner; the female is expected to care for all of the home needs, including providing food from the family *shamba* (home/garden). In reality, women do most of the country's agricultural work. In some areas the woman is not given her husband's name at marriage, and should she develop some physical problem making it impossible for her to bear children, there is no apparent stigma to the husband leaving her for a more "useful" wife. The first wife usually accepts this as her fate and does not put up a fight. Although some believe that this is a Muslim view of relationships and marriage, it is actually a cultural view.

African marriage customs have often been condemned on the grounds that they debase women. Students of women's status in Africa have perhaps concentrated too much on women’s status as wives, in which conditions of inferiority and dependence can readily be detected, and too little on the position of women as mothers, which gives them greater influence, independence, and pride.

The Marriage Ordinance of 1972 was enacted to protect married women from the old inequities based on tradition. Throughout Tanzania one finds women assuming leadership positions from being local leaders to members of parliament. The organization the United Women of Tanzania is working hard to elevate the status of women throughout the country.

Attitudes toward physical labor date from early tribal practices wherein all hard work was relegated to women and boys. The male elders were to supervise and make decisions and had no appreciable physical demands made upon them. Much time was spent visiting and discussing affairs, often to the accompaniment of drink. It was believed in some tribes that the leaders could only divine properly when intoxicated, and intoxication in no way impaired mental abilities.

The family unit is extremely important in Tanzania. Whenever there is a problem, standard procedure is to head for the home village and the nurturing shelter of the family. Children are considered an important asset to every family. They help the family economically as they grow older and are also responsible to assist their aging parents. Birth control is a difficult concept for Tanzanians to accept for this reason. Family by definition is extended far beyond the mother-father-children of one unit; it includes all relatives and often even close neighbors or residents of the home village.

Older brothers and sisters, relatives, and friends care for young children. In some tribes, children call all males in the village "father" and all females "mother," since they are all considered as such to each child. They very naturally will assist with any child in their immediate vicinity. Rarely does one hear harsh words or see strict discipline administered to children. Yet, at an early age, many youngsters assume great responsibilities in carrying water, loads of wood or other goods, or in caring for even younger children, and this is not considered harsh or unusual treatment.

Encounters Between Men and Women

As in any urban area, dating is an acceptable behavior. There are quite a few more formalities involved in the smaller villages, however, and a suitor must make several visits to the family before he would be allowed to talk alone with a young lady.

In a working situation, it is frequently felt that men do not like to take orders from women, and this causes some problems.

There appear to be very strict codes regarding husband-wife-family relationships. Parents do not consider intimate behavior toward one another appropriate in front of their children. Yet the children will defer to the father when he enters a room by removing themselves from around their mother to allow him to greet her and sit beside her. The boys will usually go to one side of the room and the girls to the other side when there is any sort of family gathering. A female daughter would never enter her father's bedroom unless he was sick and in need of assistance. Affection between married partners is a very private affair.

Polygamy is legal. Even among professionals in the capital, you might meet someone with more than one wife.

Supervisor-Employee Relationships

As discussed previously, social amenities are important in every aspect of Tanzanian life, including the workplace. In correcting unsatisfactory work, it is important to clearly tell and, if possible, show the employee why the work is incorrectly done and to show him the proper procedure for correction in a friendly, polite fashion.

There are no hard and fast rules pertaining to employer obligations in and out of the office other than those laid down in the Tanzanian labor laws. However, taking into

consideration the importance given to situations like marriage and death, it would be appreciated and most appropriate if the employer offered monetary assistance at these important times in an employee's life. Also, it should be remembered that on these occasions most individual employees have tremendous difficulties arranging transportation, as well as assuming such costs as burying the deceased or feeding all the family and friends in attendance, for sometimes more than a week.

Attitudes Toward the Elderly

Young people are raised to have a very respectful and helpful attitude toward the elderly. At puberty, many boys and girls are sent to camp to learn how to care for their future families including the aged. This camp may last for up to three months in the rural areas and maybe two weeks to a month in the larger cities. When the youngsters see an older person doing menial chores, they will eagerly and willingly offer to do the work for them.

Should there be a family problem such as an alcoholic father, the grandfather of the family might pay him a visit and point out the error of his ways. If he does not straighten out, the grandfather has the right to take his children away from him, which will bring him much shame and humiliation. This proves a great deterrent to such behavior, and further illustrates the respect accorded to the elderly in Tanzanian society.

Appropriate Forms of and Behaviors in Social Relationships

Tanzanians show great respect for their leaders and authority in general. Should there be a problem with a person in authority, those concerned will hold a meeting to discuss this with him rather than demonstrating or trying to remove him from office in another fashion.

As for loyalties, the first priority is always toward the family, but close friends are also often considered family. A man will often ask a very close friend to look after his family in his absence, and expect this friend to attend to even funeral rituals if necessary.

In family relationships, the formalities of preliminary discussions and greetings are extremely important. Even if one calls on another family member to discuss an important matter of business, one must first go through lengthy discussions regarding family health and well being prior to launching into the matter at hand.

Some appropriate topics of conversation at a social gathering would be the economy, recent happenings, deaths, accidents/incidents, and the ever-favorite topic of the weather. It would be inappropriate to discuss sex or religion.

Tanzanians are a respectful people and as such are very quiet during solemn occasions such as church meetings, prayers, or funerals. They are thoughtfully careful to keep noise down near sick neighbors or in the vicinity of a home where a death has recently occurred. It is still considered appropriate for women to remain quiet at gatherings of men, although this attitude is slowly changing.

There appear to be no problems in relationships between Tanzanians and foreigners other than those social problems previously discussed. Most foreigners are accorded polite deference unless their unseemly behavior warrants less respect.

EXCEPTIONAL BEHAVIORS

Behavior in Crisis Situations

Generally speaking, there are no animosities toward foreigners in Tanzania. Working counterparts, neighbors, and friends would likely respond to a request for help in a general crisis such as a natural disaster. Most Tanzanians will help despite their limited means; many do not have vehicles or telephones. However, as in any culture, family ties demand first priority in a crisis.

In general terms, "mama" is very much respected no matter what her nationality or color. Women seeking help should find almost anyone responsive to their needs. Children also would be accorded some care and concern, as would household servants. However, Tanzanians are generally not fond of dogs or pets of any type and might not be moved to offer assistance to an animal in need. Dogs particularly seem to be feared by the average Tanzanian.

As discussed earlier, the Tanzanian attitudes toward dress are very modest and conservative. A person dressed in scanty attire would not receive the respectful deference as would a person attired more conservatively.

Bribes and Rewards

In a society where virtually no government employee can live on his/her salary, bribery has become a fact of life. In some instances, officials will blatantly demand their "bonus" to effect needed action. More often it is subtly suggested, or the processing of papers is greatly delayed, until the needed bribe is tendered.

Mission employees should not feel obliged to bribe local officials to assist them in what should be their normal duties. Bribing government officials can sometimes backfire, resulting in arrest, confiscation of money, and imprisonment. Should an Embassy employee have difficulty dealing with the Tanzanian bureaucracy, the matter should be brought to the attention of an Embassy official. Embassy employees are under strict instructions not to participate in any form of bribery on official business as it establishes a very bad precedent and violates U.S. law.

Security Concerns

Like in all countries, there are certain situations one should avoid, if possible. For example, do not walk anywhere at night in town, or stay away from the beach at night due to roving bandits known as “beach boys.” In addition, be cautious of prostitutes who frequent hotels popular with expats and, in Tanzania, have been known to be very aggressive. It is not unusual for them to knock on the door, and if you open, force their

way in and make you pay to get them to leave. Finally, it is of particular importance to take note that Tanzania has a 12 percent HIV prevalence, so about one out of every eight adults in the country has HIV/AIDS. There is a much higher percentage in Dar es Salaam. Precautions must be taken.